



## Seong-Jin Cho • Prom 49

piano

‘Chopin is one of the most important composers to me.’ From South Korean pianist Seong-Jin Cho, winner of the 2015 International Chopin Piano Competition, and whose debut recording was an all-Chopin disc, that might hardly come as a surprise. ‘He’s a composer I feel very close to – his music is so dramatic, and sometimes poetic. And nostalgic too. Because he left his country when he was only 20, there’s always a sense of nostalgia in his music at some point.’

It was with Chopin’s First Piano Concerto that Cho won the prestigious contest, but it’s the Second that he performs at his Prom. There are similarities between the two concertos, however, Cho feels. ‘He wrote both concertos in Warsaw when he was around 20, so he was very young. I find the Second Concerto very fresh and passionate. It’s very romantic but it’s a very pure romanticism, because the composer still feels very young in it.’

Conducting the European Union Youth Orchestra for Cho’s Prom will be Gianandrea Noseda, with whom Cho recorded Chopin’s First Piano Concerto in 2016. ‘It was a wonderful experience for me because Maestro Noseda is so experienced at conducting opera. Chopin’s music is a little bit like opera at times – his melodies are always singing, and I also need to be flexible with my rhythms. Noseda was very sensitive to my playing – it was fantastic to work with him.’